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O Praise the Lord of Heaven. Full Anthem, composed by John Goss.

THAT the organist of St. Paul's has reached the highest pinnacle of fame as a composer of church music, must be admitted on all sides, whether we consider the number of his compositions, or, which would be a more correct criterion, their intrinsic value. Certain, too, it is, that in the matter of popularity there is no one to contest his supremacy; and the secret of this success is not difficult to make out. Examine his compositions, and what do we find? A vein of deep devotional feeling—a freshness of melody—an appropriateness in the setting of the words—a breadth and vigour and conception—and, above all, a purity of vocal treatment which is all the more remarkable because it is now-a-days so seldom achieved. These characteristics will be found strongly represented in the composition now under notice, and when we add that it is not above the capacity of the major portion of our country choirs who are given to anthem singing, we hope we have said enough to prove that Mr. Goss has, in this work, done credit to his reputation and honour to his friend, Mr. Joyce Murray, to whom he inscribes it.

Eight Anthems. Composed by the Rev. Sir Fred. A. Gore Ouseley, Bart.

WE have seldom looked over a volume of musical compositions with so much pleasure as this. Not that the compositions are superior to anything we have before looked over, but that they indicate most clearly to us that the composer's ideas are, like everything else at this time, undergoing a complete reformation. We hope that we shall not be misunderstood if we say that, in our opinion, the Oxford professor has, in times past, had the opportunity of leading, if not almost of forming, the taste of all lovers of English church music, and has neglected to avail himself of it. His early musical precocity, his great attainments, the responsible posts he holds, and his high social position, all these things have marked him as a leader; but no stronger proof can be adduced in support of the charge that he adopted and worked upon a false theory, than the fact that he is now almost entirely without imitators—we had almost said, without disciples. But, happily, as we hinted before, there are signs of a change. The present volume contains ample proof that its composer no longer considers it rank heresy to admit true natural feeling or modern melody into his music. We cannot say he has altogether dispensed with old worn-out forms, but he has certainly used them in a much less degree than formerly; witness the second anthem of this series, "Whom have I in heaven but Thee," in which there is hardly a point of imitation from the commencement to the end; it is pure unfettered inspiration throughout; and as charming an anthem as we have seen for a long period. It seems to us almost impossible to overrate the calm placid beauty of the first movement, or the pastoral freshness of the second; whilst the whole composition is simple, natural, unaffected, and charming. Of the three following, we prefer the first, though all are good. In style, they range somewhat between the same composer's popular anthems, "How goodly are Thy tents," and "From the rising of the sun." The next, "O praise the Lord," is chiefly remarkable for the close resemblance it bears, in its opening bars, to one of the same words by Mr. Goss, and both to a subject by Mendelssohn. We must also take exception to a somewhat common-place phrase to the words "Who holdest our soul in life." The last of the series is a setting of the first few verses of the psalm, "Like as the hart desireth the waterbrooks," and is, with perhaps the exception of "Whom have I in heaven," the most beautiful of the set. Take them all in all, this book of eight anthems is a valuable addition to the repertory of country choirs; it is also doubly welcome to us, inasmuch as it gives an earnest of the change which is taking place in the views of this composer—a change which cannot fail to have a great and beneficial effect, upon this branch of the art.

The Easter Anthems. Adapted by Robert Stroud.

This is a rather cleverly designed adaptation, the intention whereof is to bracket together such verses as the sense would seem to require, and so arrange that the verses terminated by a full stop, should be sung to the latter half of the chant, which is a double one of Hine's.

It is true a single chant would almost answer the same purpose, but there are still many people who are so entirely wedded to the use of double chants, that we have no doubt this little work was worth doing; and, in any case, it has been well done.

The Leeds Tune Book. Edited by Joseph Lancaster.

WE have been busily engaged of late, as our readers may have observed, in considering the claims of new and rival Tune Books, and to all appearance we are likely to continue similarly occupied for some time to come. Collections seem to be multiplying on all sides for reasons good, bad, and indifferent; others apparently for no reason at all. The idea of any universal Tune Book appears as far from realization as ever, many of the causes being trivial, not to say vexatious. It had been hoped when railways first commenced that distinctive manners and customs, nay, even dialects, and to some extent, tastes, would have yielded to its influence and become merged into something like uniformity; but whatever may have been its effect upon some of these things, there are other differences which appear to us to have widened rather than closed up, and Hymn Tunes stand among the first. It is true some extreme sections of the Church Catholic appear, upon this point, to have coalesced; witness the similarity between the Hymn Tunes of the Ritualists and those of the lowest sects of Nonconformists, place the Appendix of the Hymnal Noted by the side of Richard Weaver's Hymn Tune Book, and you will find no great dissimilarity, though this is but another confirmation of the old adage "extremes meet." Still we must repeat, over and over again, if necessary, that there is a standard of taste which should be more or less used by every one who aspires to supply congregations with some of the means of praise; and that standard may be indicated in the following words: a Hymn Tune should be possessed of a melody, bold and vigorous without coarseness or vulgarity, or (as the case may require), delicate and refined, without being lack-a-daisical or maudlin, and the harmonies should in each case correspond. In short, it should be *taking* and *musical*.

We fear if the above standard were applied to all the collections issued during the past twenty years, few would come out of the ordeal unscathed. The *Leeds Tune Book* would certainly suffer, principally from its want of the "taking" quality, but also on the other count as well; for it has old tunes without beauty, and new tunes without colour. The majority of the best and most popular tunes of the last ten years have no place, whilst numbers of the dreadful things perpetrated during the early years of the present century, are here, with their passing notes and coarse vulgarity, all complete. We have arrangements too, a part-song of Mendelssohn's, and "The heavens are telling," Haydn (with a duet for the two upper parts, and the long shake for the organ). The first few bars of Weber's opening chorus in *Oberon* supply us with one tune, and a phrase or two from *Der Freischütz* gives us another, under the curious title of "Sacred Wisdom." The first *motivo* from Beethoven's A flat Sonata is pressed into the service, and that exceedingly devotional piece of melody generally known as "Rousseau's Dream," also finds a place. From this it will be seen we do not altogether approve of the selection, though we have nothing to say against the harmonies: on the contrary, they evince an amount of technical knowledge and careful arrangement which is creditable in the highest degree, alike to Mr. Lancaster's education and his conscientiousness. We must confess to having hoped that greater progress had been made in true and refined musical taste in Yorkshire, than the choice of tunes in this book would seem to imply; and this is all the